

Advertisement by the Sheriff Deput of Aberdeen Shire undersubscribing, in relation to the Lords of Councill their Proclamation against Forstallers, and allowing Importation of Victuall.

WHereas, I have received the said *Proclamation* of date the *Ninth* day of *June* instant, and that the samen is of great import to be known generally to all in the Countrey, there being few who may not be concerned therein; Therefore I am advysed, and it is thought fit to caule Re-print the same, to be read at each Parish-Kirk within this Shire, and whereof the tenor followes,

PROCLAMATION

Against Regraiting of Victual, and Forstallers, and allowing the Importation of Victual free of Publick Burden.



WILLIAM by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland; Defender of the Faith, To

Miccers of Our Privy Councill, Messengers at Arms, Our Sheriffs in that part, Conjunctly and Severally, Specially, Constitute, Greeting: Forasmuch as by Several Acts of Parliament, the keeping up of Victual to a Dearth, is strictly Prohibited, and particularly, it is Statute by the Acts, *James* the Second Parliament *Cap. sixth, twenty two and twenty three*, that for the Escheuing of Dearth: Sheriffs, Bailies and other Officers both to Burgh, and to Land; inquire what Persons Buys Victual, and holds it to a Dearth: And that the saids Sheriffs and Officers make such known, that in case they hold more then will Sustain them, and their Meinzie to New-Corn they may be punished, and Demeaned as Ockerers and Usurers; and the Victual Escheated to Us; and that the same be Presented to Mercats, and sold as the price goes. And by the Act *James* the Second Parliament *ninth Cap. thirty-eight and thirty-ninth*, it is Ordained that no manner of Victual be holden in Girnals by any man to a Dearth, but allenerly what is needful for their own Persons, and Sustentation of their Houshold's, and that the saids Persons present all that they have more to the Mercat, under the Pain of Elcheat thereof: And Searchers are appointed in *Edinburgh* and *Liech* to make the saids Acts Effectual: As likewise, the Crime of Forstalling is forbidden by several Acts and Statutes, and particularly by the Act *James* the Sixth, Parliament *twelfth, Cap. one hundred and forty eight* it is Declared, that who Buies any Merchandize, or Victual coming to Fair or Mercat, or makes any Contract or Promise for the buying of the same, before the said Merchandize or Victual shall be in the Fair or Mercat-Place ready to be sold,

or shall make any motion by Word, Writ, or Message for raising of the Prices, or Dearer selling of the said Merchandise and Victual; or who shall Diswaide any from coming, and bringing the foresaid Merchandize and Victual to Fair or Mercat, shall be Esteemed and Iudged a Forestaller; And it is Ordained that all such Forestallers may be Pursued before the Iustices; or Magistrats of Burghs, and that without a special Libel, but only upon Forestalling in General, and the Persons convict to be Fined for the first Fault in Forty Pounds, for the Second in one hundred Merks, and for the Third to Incurr the Tinsel of Moveables. And seeing that through the not due Observance, and the Execution of the foresaid Acts: The Calamity of the Countrey, by the present Scarcity and Dearth is greatly Increased. THEREFORE We with Advice of the Lords of Our Privy Council, have thought fit to Revive the same, and Ordain them to be put to Strict Execution, and for that Effect, to Impower and Require all Sheriffs of Shires, Stewarts of Stewartries, Lords and Bailies of Regalities, and their Deputs, and Magistrats of Burghs, as likewise all Commissioners of Supplie, and Iustices of Peace, to cause Inquire, and search to be made, who holds up, or Girnels Victual or keeps stacks contrary to the foresaid Laws, and to Command and Charge the keepers up of the said Victual in Girnels, Stacks, or otherways Contrary to the saids Statutes either to Thresh out, bring, and Expose the same for Sale, in open and ordinary Mercats, or otherwise to open their Girnels, and other Houses where the Victual is kept, and there Sell the same, as the said Sheriffs, Stewarts of Stewartries, Lords and Bailies of Regalities, and their Deputs, and Magistrats of Burghs, or any two of the saids Commissioners, shall find the ordinary Price to Rule for the time in the Countrey not below the last *Candlemas* Fiers, with Certification that if they Failzie therein, they shall be Proceeded against and the Pains of the foresaid Acts of Parliament Execute upon them with all rigour: And in the mean time the Victual Girneld, and Unlawfully kept up as said is, Arreasted and Sequesterat by the foresaid Sheriffs and others as Elcheat. And further, We with Advice foresaid, Command and Charge all Magistrats of Burghs, and other Officers of the Land to take Care that all Mercats and Fairs be duely Regular, conform to the Laws, without Extortion, and to cause put the foresaid Acts of Parliament against Forestallers to due and vigorous Execution: Certifying the foresaid Sheriffs, Magistrats and others, who shall fail in their Duty in the Premisses, that upon information given to the Lords of Our Privy Council, they shall be therefore severely Punished, as the Lords of Our Privy Council shall see Cause. And further, for the better Relieif of the Countrey under the present great Scarcity, whereby the Prices of Victual are risen above the Rates mentioned in the Act of Parliament for prohibiting the Import of Forraign Victual, We with Advice foresaid, do hereby grant License and full liberry to all Persons to import Victual and Corn of all sorts, from any forraign Kingdom or Countrey, and that free of Custom, Excise, or other Imposition, and for that effect Recommends it to the Commissioners of Our Thesaury, to Discharge the Exacting thereof for the said Victual to be imported as said is, after the day and date hereof, and that notwithstanding of any Act of Parliament or Book of Rates Imposing the same, Declaring, that this License and Liberry, is to Endure until the First Day of September next to come, and no longer. OUR WILL IS HEREOFOR; and We Charge you strictly and Command, that incontinent these Our Letters seen, ye pass to the Mercat-Cross of *Edinburgh*, and to the Mercat-Cross

Crosses of the remanent Head-Burghs of the severall Shires and Stewartries within this Kingdom, and there in Our Name and Authority, by open Proclamation, make Intimation hereof, that none pretend Ignorance. And Ordains these Presents to be Printed.

Given under Our Signet at Edinburgh the Ninth Day of June and of Our Reign the eight Year, 1696.

Ex deliberatione Dominorum Secreti Concilii.
GILB. ELIOT *Ch. Sec. Concilii.*

GOD save the KING.

And now seeing that by the foresaid *Proclamation*, it is evident how much the King and Lords of his Majesties Privy Council, are concerned, to have these abuses of *Forestalling*, keeping up of *Viſtual*, and exorbitant prices thereof restrained; and that Sheriffs and other Judges in their respective bounds and jurisdictions, are peremptorily required to put the said *Proclamation* to due execution, under the peril of being severely punished: and particularly, that Sheriffs and other Magistrats therein mentioned, shall cause sell all *Viſtual* at the ordinary Price for the time in the Countrey, not below the last *Candlemas Fiers*; and I considering and advysing with the most understanding Persons I could find in and about this Burgh of *Aberdeen*, what the Prices of *Viſtual* may be universally thorow this Shire this current Year, to *Martinmas* next; and also finding that the *Fiers* of the Year duely made by the inquest of sworn Men, both before Sheriff and Commisſer, at *Candlemas* last, for Crompt One Thousand six hundred and ninety five, for the best *Bear*, *Malt* or *Meal*, does not exceed the sume of Ten merks Scots the Boll; and that generally the Price betwixt Heretors and Merchants for this last Crompt, have been for the most part about the same Rates; or but litle higher of late bought by sundries, who may be justly called *Foreſtallers*, and who take advantage of the Countrey, and to sell at more exorbitant Rates, doe keep up *Viſtual* from sale, and so oblige the poor people to give what Price they please, or starve; whereas sundry considerable Merchants in this Burgh are yet selling and retailing their *Meal* at Thirteen Merks per Boll, doe therefore by authority of the said *Proclamation*, and power given thereby to Sheriffs, for setting of Prices of *Viſtual*, and restraining the abuses therein mentioned; ordain and declare that the highest Price of the best *Meal*, *Bear* or *Malt*, of the foresaid Crompt, and

and others in Girnells now selling, or to be sold within this Shire, shall not exceed the sume of *nine pound scots* per bush in ready money; as being the most ordinary current Price for the time, and proportionally, for greater or lesser quantities of lawfull and standart measure: And in caise any be sold upon trust, that it be sold for such reasonable and proportionall rates to the said ready money, as may consist with Law, and without extortion upon the buyers.

And these are also ordaining, that all in this Shire who have *Corn or Bear in stacks*, or otherwayes preserved, shall cause thresh or sell out the same at reasonable Rates, proportionall to the foresaids Prices, as the *Corn and Bear* would yeild in *Meal or Malt*, or make sell and dispose the same in *Meal or Malt* themselves, by due sale at the Rates foresaids. And that none, whither Heretor or Merchant keep up *Girnells of victuals*, *Meal, Bear or Malt*, or any quantity thereof, any manner of way, may then will serve their own Families to *Martinmas* next at farthest; Certifying such, whither in Burgh or Landwart, as shall doe in the contrary or shall be guilty of any manner of *Forestalling*, or contraveening the said *Laudible Lawes and Proclamation* abovementioned, either by keeping up *Vitnual* of any kind, or taking for the same above the Rates before expressed, or any way *Forestalling* of *Mercats*, prohibited by the saids *Lawes*, upon complaint, or any discovery thereof, they will be persued legally, punished conform to the *Acts of Parliament and Councill* made against transgressors, and their *Forestalled Vitnual*, or other Goods, seized and made *Escheat* in manner, therein prescryved, and that with all right competent in *Law*: And that none pretend ignorance, thir presence ordained to be published at each parish Kirk within this Shire, by Readers thereat the next Lords Day immediatly after Divine Service, duly kept by them to be furth coming for the use of all concerned for which this is warrand. Given at *Aberdeen* the twenty Fourth day of *June*, *One Thousand six hundred and ninety six Years*, by me the said Sheriff Deput under subscriyving.

ANDREW FRASER.

24 June 1896